

REMARKS

This Response is in reply to the final Office Action mailed on May 19, 2005. The Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 13 and 14 recite allowable subject matter. Claims 1, 3-5, 9 and 14 have been amended. Claims 8, 10 and 13 were canceled and the limitations were added to amended claim 1. Claims 11 and 12 were canceled because the limitations are now recited in amended claim 1. Claim 2 was previously canceled. Claims 15-17 have been withdrawn from consideration. Please note that the Applicants have amended claims 15-17 to put the claims in condition for allowance since amended claim 1 should now be allowable. Claims 1, 3-7, 9, 14 and 18 are pending herein. No new matter has been added. Entry and consideration of the amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

Claims 3-5 were objected to for depending from a canceled base claim. Claims 3-5 have been amended to depend from claim 1. The Applicants therefore respectfully request that the objection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §103(a)

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mori (US 2003/0085600) in view of Mitchell (5,697,672). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to recite the subject matter indicated as allowable in claim 13 and the intervening claims. Accordingly, the Applicants assert that claim 1 is patentable over the cited references. Furthermore, since claims 3, 4, 6, 8, 9 and 18 depend from amended claim 1, these claims are allowable as well. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mori (US 2003/0085600) in view of Mitchell (5,697,672) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Yokota (5,044,693). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

By reason of its dependency on amended claim 1, the Applicants assert that claim 5 is patentable over the cited references. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection of the claim under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mori (US 2003/0085600) in view of Mitchell (5,697,672) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Kawasaki (US 2004/0130202). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

By reason of its dependency on amended claim 1, the Applicants assert that claim 7 is patentable over the cited references. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection of the claim under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

Claims 10-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mori (US 2003/0085600) in view of Mitchell (5,697,672) as applied to claim 8 above, and further in view of Panicci (2,964,099).

Claims 10-12 have been canceled. Therefore, this rejection is now moot.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments to claims made herein and the arguments presented above, it is submitted that the Examiner's objections and rejections have been overcome and should be withdrawn. The application should now be in condition for allowance.

Should any changes to the claims and/or specification be deemed necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned to discuss the same.

This Response is being timely filed. In the event that any other fees are required for the entry of this Response, the Patent and Trademark Office is specifically authorized to charge such fee to Deposit Account No. 50-0518 in the name of Steinberg & Raskin, P.C.

An early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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